

Ashland

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"Gateway to the North Maine Woods"

Ashland Community Development Committee Meeting August 11, 2016 Notes

Attendance:

Charles Tardif- Maibec
Kevin Paridis- Maibec
Mark Rafford- Rafford Trucking
Peter Tabor- JD Irving
Scott Ferland- Maine Woods Lumber Co
Brian Kirkey- Eco-Shell
Ralph Dwyer- Ashland Town Manager
Cristine Daggett- ACAP
Kevin Bushey- Economic Dev't Cte
David Basley- Economic Dev't Cte
Don Tardie- Economic Dev't Cte
Larry Douchette- Portage Town Manager

The meeting was opened by Chairperson Don Tardie at 7:45 am.

Don explained the history of education committee and how it has morphed into the mission of improving the area's economic development efforts.

The mission of the committee is "To promote, develop, and attract a quality workforce in support of current and future needs for regional employees".

Through this effort, it is hoped that the committee can effect positive impact on taxes and school enrollments.

Introductions were given of each of the attendees and Don opened the agenda by thanking everyone for their inputs to the questionnaire sent them.

The findings were prepared and given to each attendee. Don went through each question and the replies. During this process additional comments were provided below:

Q1

- Trades a problem for many of the forest products companies
- People don't relocate
- Basic laborers still an issue- work ethic. They quit when work is hard
- Motivation and leadership issues
- Training issues- boiler operators -fed \$ available for wages during boiler
- Training...ACAP can help here
- Hard to bring in skilled workers
- Negative media hurting our area
- We have positives like recreation, lifestyle but we don't get good publicity
- Spousal issues for relocating workers
- How do you attract both if both want to work?
- Friend structure is important to younger workers
- College recruiting age is the best time to recruit...
- Growing local people for trades is important
- More high tech today that requires better skill sets
- Workers will travel but how do we attract them to relocate.

Q2

- There are training resources available in the county

Q3

- Spousal employment impacts relocation.
- Restaurant limitation
- Lodging limitation
- Declining population

Job opportunities:

- Mining would be big
- More wood production might be done in the future.
- Wood prices are good for softwood to make lumber, however very depressed for hardwood pulpwood.
- Investments in faster production
- Issue with what to do with chips implying need for more value added for paper, panelboard or pellets.
 - Bark, shavings: what to do with them...
- MDF might be a future market?

- Cogeneration?

Q4

- Training for loggers.
- Funds for instructors at NMDC still in doubt?
 - Hasn't started in county?
- Caribou CTE? Are we sending kids there? Houlton and St. John Valley Training Centers offer excellent programs. Is there an opportunity for Ashland to have a training center specific to Wood Products?
- Opportunity for millwright training- need to follow up.
- Qualified license training is a gap...
- NMCC has a boiler operation.... Why don't they train?
- Tractor trailer trng- get closer to Ashland
- School and mill discussion. Employers going to schools- To discuss job opportunities. Being done but may need to improve
- Internships- more can be done here
 - Tied to summer jobs too

- Changing technology is changing jobs of the further(future)??.not your father's mill job

- Satellite program for training(cte)?

- Teachers not knowing what exist in mill jobs. Are we doing a good job in sponsoring teacher tours?

- What are schools doing regarding the culture of forest products industry?
- Negative vs. positive messaging.
 - Positive messaging is hard to find?
- We have cool things that don't get promoted

Q5

Covered during brainstorming session:

Brainstorming

A list of areas was created for consideration by attendees to determine what areas are a priority for follow up planning and implementation.

The list includes:

1. Workplace Coordination and Opportunities (through ACAP)
2. Community College Offerings
3. Adult Education/ High School

4. Leadership Development
5. Real Estate Assistance
6. Property Rentals
7. Job Fair
8. Regional Brochure
9. Banking
10. Future Committee Support
11. Internships/CO-OP Training
12. Teacher Messaging
13. Technical Training
14. IT Training
15. Develop/ Enforce Zoning Laws (beautification of area)
16. Certification Training
17. Promotions/Branding Opportunities
18. NMDC Branding (Aroostook County)

The attendees prioritized this list and agreed to work towards developing plans based on the following: (These are the top priorities for the next 90 days).

Objective 1	Goals	Lead Entity	Resources	Start	Complete By:
	(From list)				
Develop Employer Internship Process	4, 12,13, 14, 16 Secondary: 2,3	Employers	ACAP ED Cte Towns Educators	ASAP	TBD

Objective 2	Goals	Lead Entity	Resources	Start	Complete By:
	(From list)				
Develop /Enforce Local Zoning	15	Towns	Grants Private Zoning ctes	ASAP	TBD

Objective 3	Goals	Lead Entity	Resources	Start	Complete By:
	(From list)				
Promotion & Branding	7,8,18	Ed Cte	NMDC Aroostook Partnership Employer inputs	ASAP	TBD

			(videos) Social Media		

The committee indicated the meeting notes will be prepared and sent to attendees and a future meeting with additional stakeholders will be convened in the next 4-5 weeks.

The meeting adjourned at 10 am.

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Don Tardie, Chair
Economic Development Committee
Town of Ashland